



PWM



July 18, 2006

Patrick Morse
Mercury TMDL Unit
Regional Water Quality Control Board
11020 Sun Center Drive #200
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

06 JUL 20 PM 4:20

RECEIVED
SACRAMENTO
CVRWQCB

Dear Mr. Morse:

Thank you for meeting with us in March to discuss the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Regional Board) proposed Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for mercury. We are concerned with the direction the Regional Board is proceeding with respect to this TMDL. We are also concerned with the scientific merits of the recently released peer review document and the future requirements to landowners. The Basin Plan Amendments based on the proposed TMDL calls for farmers, wetland managers and others to pay for studies or prepare management plans for a pollutant over which they have no control.

The undersigned have been working closely in Northern California for the past decade to improve water quality, while maintaining the sustainability of farming operations, managed wetlands, rural communities and fish spawning grounds. These efforts have included establishing partnerships with federal and state fish and wildlife agencies. We will continue to collaborate with these entities to improve habitat and water quality in the region.

With respect to water quality and the Regional Board, we have been working closely with the Regional Board through the Irrigated Lands Program (ILP) to address water quality directly

associated with agriculture and managed wetlands. In this and other related programs, land owners have accepted responsibility for pollutants they add to waterways. However, mercury is not a pollutant added to the waterways by farmers and wetland managers and should be regulated accordingly. Mercury is a relic pollutant that is present as a result of historic mining and natural erosion. Mercury is passed through the watershed and any effects due to this passage are not the responsibility of today's landowners.

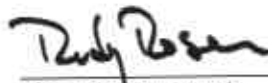
We believe it is important that the Regional Board help establish policy that ensures efforts to address mercury do not inappropriately inhibit other activities that benefit the public, such as wetland restoration, agriculture and flood management. We strongly believe that the mercury issue is a state and federal responsibility and thus public funding is appropriate to address mercury monitoring and remediation.

We look forward to working with you on mercury and other water quality issues throughout our region.

Sincerely yours,



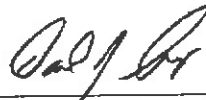
California Rice Commission



Ducks Unlimited



California Waterfowl Association



Northern California Water Association

cc: Mike Chrisman, Resources Agency
Linda Adams, Dan Skopec, CALEPA
Ryan Broddrick, DFG
Steve Thompson, USFWS
Tam Doduc, SWRCB
Pamela Creedon, RWQCB
Dennis Albani, Office of the Governor